

IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 12. This sheet, which includes Figs. 12 and 13, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 12 and 13.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet (1 sheet)

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are currently pending, with Claims 14-20 being withdrawn as directed to non-elected inventions. Claims 1, 4, and 9 have been amended; and Claim 21 has been added by the present amendment. The changes and additions to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the Information Disclosure Statements filed July 20, 2004 and August 30, 2005 failed to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(3) as not containing a concise explanation of the relevancy of the references; the drawings were objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5) as not including reference symbols 109a and 109b; and Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,402,791 to Saitoh et al. (hereinafter “the ‘791 patent”).

Applicants respectfully submit that the Information Disclosure Statement filed July 20, 2004, and August 30, 2005, should be considered by the Examiner because an adequate Statement of Relevancy was included with both submissions. The IDS filed July 20, 2004, included a copy of the European Search Report, which indicated the relevancy of the cited references. Moreover, the IDS filed August 30, 2005, was submitted with the translation of the Japanese Office Action in which the references were cited. Thus, based on M.P.E.P. § 609.04(a), Applicants respectfully submit that both of the Statements should have been considered by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully submit that, in the next Office Action, an initialed copy of the associated PTO 1449 forms be included with the next action.

Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to the drawings is rendered moot by the present amendment to the drawings. Figure 12 has been amended to include the reference symbols 109a, 109b, 110a, and 110b.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an ultrasonic probe, comprising: (1) a piezoelectric transducer for sending and receiving an ultrasonic wave; and (2) a conductive substrate for applying current to the piezoelectric transducer. Further, Claim 1 clarifies that the conductive substrate is arranged oppositely to a side face of the piezoelectric transducer and has an end portion that is closer to the piezoelectric transducer and that is arranged outside of the side face of the piezoelectric transducer. Further, Claim 1 states that a conductive material is arranged in a corner portion formed by the piezoelectric transducer and the conductive substrate, the conductive material electrically connecting the piezoelectric transducer to the conductive substrate.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1, the '791 patent is directed to a piezoelectric single crystal having a large electromechanical coupling coefficient. As shown in Figure 1, the '791 patent discloses a printed wiring board 9 connected to a lamination layer, such as a piezoelectric member 1, by bending the end portion of the printed wiring board 9 and tucking it into the lamination layer. Applicants note that, in this configuration, the printed wiring board 9 would be bent at right angles and would be subjected to great stress. In this regard, Applicants note that the embodiment shown in Figure 1 of the '791 patent corresponds to the prior art embodiment shown in Figures 14 and 15 of the present application.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '791 patent fails to disclose an ultrasonic probe including a conductive material that is arranged in a corner portion formed by a piezoelectric transducer and a conductive substrate, the material electrically connecting the piezoelectric transducer to the conductive substrate, as recited in amended Claim 1. In this regard, Applicants note that the Office Action merely refers to Figures 1 and 8 as

disclosing all of the elements in Claim 1, including the conductive material arranged in a corner portion formed by the piezoelectric transducer and the conductive substrate. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Figures 1 and 8 do not disclose the conductive material recited in Claim 1. In a non-limiting example, Applicants refer the Examiner to element 9 in Figure 2 of the present application. Further, Applicants note that an advantage of Applicants' invention is that the stress inherent in bending the end portion of a printed wiring board and tucking them into a transducer can be eliminated and breakage can be prevented.

Accordingly, for the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of Claim 1 (and all associated dependent claims) as anticipated by the '791 patent.

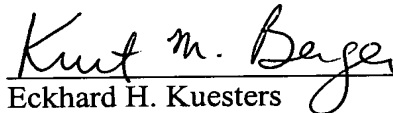
Applicants note that Claim 9 has been amended to depend from Claim 1.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 1 (and dependent Claims 2-13) patentably define over the '791 patent.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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